



## MICHIGAN LICENSED BEVERAGE ASSOCIATION®

*Retailers dedicated to the responsible sale and service of beverage alcohol*

### **Catherine Pavick: Modifying mandatory helmet law means economic AND safety boon for Michigan**

Every year, Michigan business owners from Monroe to Sturgis to Muskegon to the Upper Peninsula watch potential tourism sales ride out of Michigan as motorcyclists leave our state to spend their vacations in other states with less restrictive helmet laws.

Additionally, motorcyclists in all the surrounding states spend their travel and vacation dollars everywhere in the Midwest and Great Lakes states except Michigan – again because of our mandatory helmet law.

Fred Sherman of Muskegon, an avid rider, says he and his family spend their vacations where they have the option to wear a helmet or not. He is just one of countless Michigan motorcycle enthusiasts giving their tourism dollars to other states.

Warren Kostreva used to run his Shoe Repair and Retail Leather Shop in Menominee, Michigan. He moved it across the border to Peshtigo, Wisconsin because Michigan's mandatory helmet law hurt his business.

According to Mr. Kostreva, he expanded to two stores from his first store in Menominee. Soon, the second store in Peshtigo accounted for 80% of all his business. Although his first store in Michigan was located less than two miles from the state line, many riders refused to cross into our state to shop. In fact, he says he could see them turn around at the sign denoting the Michigan/Wisconsin border.

Mr. Kostreva is just one example of tourism businesses hurt by the mandatory helmet law. The fact is, not only is Michigan the only Great Lakes state with this law, but there are 30 states throughout the country that have no mandatory helmet laws.

Those who argue that we need the mandatory helmet law point to Michigan's 122 motorcycle fatalities in 2005 – among the highest in the country – as proof. What their logic fails to address is that we've *had the law for thirty years* – so why hasn't it worked? Instead of curbing motorcycle fatalities, Michigan's rate is 22% higher than neighboring Wisconsin – *which has no mandatory motorcycle helmet law*.

Since Michigan's mandatory helmet law has not prevented or even reduced motorcycle fatalities, what is the solution? ABATE (American Bikers Aimed Toward Education) of Michigan recently demonstrated that unlicensed, untrained, and uninsured riders contributed directly to Michigan's poor fatality record.

While Michigan struggles to save jobs, generate revenue, and erase a billion dollars in red ink from the state budget year after year, an economic impact study done by Michigan Consultants concluded that if Michigan's mandatory helmet law were modified to one of adult choice, education, and training, rather than the mandatory helmet law now on the books, our state would realize an *annual \$1.2 billion jump in tourism, sales, and sales taxes*.

By modifying Michigan's mandatory helmet law to one of choice, combined with strict licensing, education, and training, our state stands ready to benefit not only from an economic boon in tourism dollars – but a boon in more safe riders on the road.

Catherine Pavick  
Executive Director

Michigan Licensed Beverage Association (MLBA) represents more than 2,400 retailers in the hospitality industry.